an immediate fillip to these programmes; and

(b) if so, th$_t$ details of the action taken by the :>tate Governments on the above directions?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI (;. S. DHILLON): (a) and (b) There is a system for periodical review of >rogress in implementing the Central! *r* Sponsored Agricultural Programme; in consultation with the States. Duri lg the year 1987, such reviews were ui dertaken in February, April and July n joint meetings with the States. In the course of the meetings corrective neasures were suggested for accele ating the progress. These measures include transfer of improved techn 'logy through extension system i$_n$ the States, supply of quality inputs n time, early release of funds and egular monitoring of the programme i. The State Governments hav$_e$ be *m* accordingly implementing the T rogrammes to reach benefits to farr ers and to increase production and productivity.

Modernisation o Rourkela Steel Plant through World Bank

*278. SHRI 1IASUDEV MOHAPA-TR . KUMAB ; SUSHILA TIRIA:

Will the Mln rter of STEEL AND MINES be plea ed to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank tea Bi after visiting Rourkela Steel Plam has indicated to take up modernisatio 1 proposal of the said Steel Plant; anc

(b) if so, wiiat steps have been taken by Government to expedite the proposal?

THE MINIST IR OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Deficiency of Micronutrients due to use of chemical fertilizers

*279. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRI-CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that continuous use of chemical fertilizers ha$_s$ resulted into deficiency of micronutrients in the agricultural land;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to aid and advise the farmers to check this deficiency;

(c) whether it is a fact that the deficiency of micronutrients has reduced the production of grains; and

(d) if so, what measures have been taken by Government to boost up the production of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI G. S. DHILLON): (a) It has been observe^ that intensive cropping through the cultivation of High Yielding Varieties with the use Of NPK Chemical fertilisers is likely to lead to heavy removal of micronutrients, which, if not replenished, could result in their deficiency.

(b) The Central Government has distributed fre$_e$ of cost 215 Absorption Spectophoto-meters to various State Soil Testing Laboratories to test the soils fo$_r$ micronutrient deficiency so that the farmers could be advised on use of suitable micronutrient fertilisers. Major, micronutrient fertilisers have also been included in Fertiliser Control Order to ensur$_e$ that quality products are supplied t$_0$ th$_e$ farmers.

(c) and (d) There is no report that the foodgrain production[1] in the country has been -reduced due to micronutrient deficiency. However, th$_e$ -erop yield could be affected locally on account of micronutrient deficiency which could be rectified by the use of suitable, rriiprqnu.trieot fertilisers, based ■ on soil test results.' '